

Activity 1

A) Read the text. (Remember: Underline the words or sentences you do not understand)

3 Secrets To Understanding What Makes Music Tick by Duane Shinn

It's no secret that virtually everyone loves music in some form or other. After all, music is the universal language. In one way or another we all participate in it from our cradle song to our wedding song to our funeral song, with thousands of other stops along the way.

The country-western fan may not like jazz, but if we all liked the same kind of music, there just wouldn't be the variety that is available to us now. We can choose from musical styles ranging from heavy classical and opera to rock to children's songs to Broadway musicals to gospel music to the blues.

So what does all music have in common? What makes music tick?

At least 3 things – sometimes more, but never less:

1. Melody
2. Rhythm
3. Harmony

The melody is the part of a song or composition that you whistle or hum – in other words, the tune of the song. In one sense, it is the most visible of the 3 elements, because melody is what identifies a song. Without melody, it would be difficult to even conceive of a song or piece.

Rhythm is the beat – the swing – the throb of the music. It happens in repeating patterns, depending upon the type of music. It is like a horizontal line of beats which occur at regular or semi-regular intervals.

Harmony, the 3rd aspect of music, is the musical background of a song – the chords, or intervals “behind” the melody. Without harmony, a song sounds empty – like a vocalist singing without an accompanist – or accapella. Music doesn't HAVE to have harmony to function, but in actual practice it almost always does.

You could spend a lifetime learning all the nuances of music, but its most basic form, it is these 3 elements combined together: melody, rhythm, and harmony that comprise music.

B) Answer the questions:

- Do you love music?
- What kind of music do you like?
- What types of music do you know? List them.
- Do you remember the first time you listen to music?
- According to the text, what makes music tick (=work)?